

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 38-39 are canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 12, 20, 21, 23, 24, 37 and 40-43 are amended.

5 Claims 1-21, 23-29, 37 and 40-43 remain pending in the application; claims 9-11, 13-19 and 25-29 being previously withdrawn and claims 22 and 30-36 being previously canceled. The pending claims are listed as follows:

10 1. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer-implemented method for providing an on-line appointment between a service provider and a user who is interested in a service the service provider may be able to provide, over a network, said method~~ comprising:

 (Ⓐ) receiving a request from a user system over a network for appointment availability of ~~the a~~ service provider during a time period;

15 (Ⓑ) determining available appointment times within the time period for the service provider through use of a central appointments server having access to a central appointment database that stores calendars for ~~various~~ a plurality of service providers, including a first calendar for the service provider;

 (Ⓒ) transmitting the available appointment times to the user system;

 (Ⓓ) receiving a selected appointment time from the available appointment times;

20 and

 (Ⓔ) ~~setting the on-line appointment between the user and the service provider at the selected appointment time, and~~

wherein the user can schedule the on-line appointment through any computer as long as the computer can access the Internet with a browser, wherein the user interacts with the browser when scheduling the on-line appointment;

wherein the method further comprising ~~checking another~~ causing a second calendar ~~of maintained by~~ the service provider to be checked to determine if there is a conflict between the first calendar and the another calendar due to the selected appointment time; verify that the selected appointment time is available in the second calendar; and

wherein the another calendar is maintained by the service provider
setting an on-line appointment between the user system and the service provider at the selected appointment time if the selected appointment time is verified to be available in the second calendar.

2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the time period is a day.

3. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1,
wherein ~~said receiving (a) of~~ receiving the request for appointment availability ~~includes~~ comprises receiving a time duration for the on-line appointment, and

wherein ~~said determining (b) of~~ determining the available appointment times ~~are~~ comprises receiving those times during the time period that the service provider is available for at least the time duration.

4. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein ~~said setting~~
(e) setting the on-line appointment comprises:

(e1) transmitting verification information for the on-line appointment to
the user system,

5 (e2) receiving a verification of the verification information for the on-line
appointment; and

(e3) subsequently setting the on-line appointment between the user system
and the service provider at the selected appointment time when the verification has been
received.

10 5. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1,
wherein ~~said setting (e) of setting~~ the on-line appointment ~~sets~~ comprises setting a
requested online appointment, and ~~wherein said method further comprises:~~

(f) subsequently receiving a confirmation for the requested on-line appointment.

15 6. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 5, ~~wherein said~~
~~method further comprises~~ further comprising:

(g) updating the requested on-line appointment to a confirmed on-line
appointment after the confirmation has been received.

20 7. (Original) A method as recited in claim 5, wherein the time period is a
predetermined day, and wherein the network is the Internet.

8. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1, ~~wherein said method further comprises~~ further comprising:

(f) ~~subsequently~~ rendering the selected appointment time for the service provider unavailable.

9. (Withdrawn) A computer-implemented method for providing an on-line appointment over a network, said method comprising:

(a) transmitting to a user, an electronic calendar pertaining to the user;
(b) transmitting a list of available service providers to the user who is interested in a service the service providers have specified in advance that they provide;

(c) receiving a request for appointment availability of a selected one of the available service providers;

(d) determining available time slots for the selected one of the available service providers;

(e) transmitting the available time slots to the user,
(f) receiving, from the user, a time slot selection from the available time slots to establish an appointment with the selected one of the available service providers;

(g) updating the user's electronic calendar with the appointment; and
(h) updating an electronic calendar for the selected one of the available service providers with the appointment,

wherein said method further includes requesting the user to enter information regarding the user for the appointment after the user and the selected one of the available service providers have established the appointment at the selected time slot,

wherein at least one piece of the information requested from the user depends on the industry the selected one of the available service providers is in, and

wherein said method is implemented by another entity, with the another entity being independent of both the service providers and the user.

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10. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 9,

wherein the request for appointment availability includes a time period,

wherein said determining (d) determines the available time slots for the time period, and

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wherein prior to said receiving (f), an electronic calendar as well as the available time slots are concurrently presented on a computing device associated with the user.

11. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the time period is a day.

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12. (Currently Amended) ~~A computer-readable medium including computer code for providing an on-line appointment between a service provider and a user who is interested in a service the service provider may be able to provide, over a network, said computer-readable medium comprising~~ One or more computer-readable media comprising instructions that are executable to implement an on-line scheduling application that is configured to:

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~~computer program code for receiving~~ receive a request for appointment availability of the a service provider;

~~computer program code for determining determine available appointment slots for the service provider through use of a central appointments server having access to a central appointment database that stores a first calendar for at least the service provider;~~

5 ~~computer program code for transmitting transmit the available appointment slots to the user, a user system;~~

~~computer program code for receiving receive a selected appointment slot from the available appointment slots;~~

10 ~~computer program code for setting the on-line appointment between the user and the service provider at the selected appointment slot, the on-line appointment initially having a pending status; and~~

~~computer program code for enabling the service provider to confirm the on-line appointment which has been requested by the user and then altering the on-line appointment from the pending status to a confirmed status;~~

15 ~~wherein the user can schedule the appointment through any computer as long as the computer can access the Internet with a browser;~~

~~wherein the user interacts with the browser when scheduling the on-line appointment;~~

20 ~~wherein said computer readable medium further comprises computer program code for checking another cause a second calendar of maintained by the service provider to be checked to determine if there is a conflict between the two calendars first calendar and the second calendar due to the selected appointment slot, to verify that the selected appointment slot is available in the second calendar; and~~

~~wherein the another calendar is maintained by the service provider~~

set an on-line appointment between the user system and the service provider at the selected appointment slot if the selected appointment slot is verified to be available in the second calendar.

5 13. (Withdrawn) A computer readable medium including computer code for providing an on-line appointment over a network, said computer readable medium comprising:

 computer program code for transmitting to a user, an electronic calendar pertaining to the user;

10 computer program code for transmitting a list of available service providers to the user who is interested in a service the service providers have specified in advance that they provide;

 computer program code for receiving a request for appointment availability of a selected one of the available service providers;

15 computer program code for determining available time slots for the selected one of the available service providers;

 computer program code for transmitting the available time slots to the user;

 computer program code for receiving, from the user, a time slot selection from the available time slots to establish an appointment with the selected one of the available
20 service providers;

 computer program code for updating the user's electronic calendar with the appointment; and

computer program code for updating an electronic calendar for the selected one of the available service providers with the appointment,

wherein said method further includes requesting the user to enter information regarding the user for the appointment after the user and the selected one of the available service providers have established the appointment at the selected time slot,

wherein at least one piece of the information requested from the user depends on the industry the selected one of the available service providers is in, and

wherein the on-line appointment is implemented by another entity based on the computer program code, with the another entity being independent of both the service providers and the user.

14. (Withdrawn) A computer-implemented method for doing business over a global computer network, said method comprising:

a) registering service providers over the global computer network to identify at least offered services, appointment hours, contact Information for the registered service providers;

b) providing an on-line calendar for each of the registered service providers;

c) registering individuals over the global computer network;

d) providing an on-line calendar for each of the registered individuals; and

e) setting of appointments with certain of the registered service providers when the appointments have been requested by any of the registered individuals, and for each appointment being set, said setting (e) at least places appointment indications on the

on-line calendars of the associated one of the registered service providers and the associated one of the individuals,

wherein at least some information regarding the service providers are stored in an on-line directory,

5 wherein said method further comprises providing a search facility that the registered individuals can search, over the global computer network, the on-line directory for registered service providers to set appointments with,

wherein said method is implemented by a third-party entity, with the third-party entity being independent of the registered service providers and the registered
10 individuals, and

wherein the individuals can schedule the appointments through any computer as long as the computer can access the Internet with a browser.

15 15. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 14, wherein said providing (d) provides the on-line calendars for each of the registered individuals without cost to the registered individuals.

16. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 15, wherein said providing (b) provides the on-line calendars for each of the registered service providers for a fee.

20 17. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the registered service providers are provided in an on-line directory, and wherein during said setting (e) of the appointments, the registered individuals are able to locate appropriate service

providers using the on-line directory.

18. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the website provides on-line calendars, and wherein as on-line appointments are made, the on-line calendars of the users are automatically updated.

19. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 18, wherein the on-line appointments have a duration, and
wherein the duration of the on-line appointments is determined by said computer-implemented method based on a type of appointment.

20. (Currently Amended) An on-line appointment system ~~that supports a large number of users in making appointments over the Internet~~, comprising:

~~an appointment server coupled to the network; and~~
an appointment database ~~coupled to said appointment server~~ configured to store calendars for one or more service providers,

~~wherein said an appointment server and said appointment database together provide storage and access for calendars of at least one or more service providers and provide assistance to users, each user being interested in a service the service providers may be able to provide,~~ configured to furnish access to the calendars via a network to schedule appointments with the one or more service providers and thereafter permit confirmation, by the one or more service providers, of the appointments that have been scheduled with the one or more service providers,

wherein said system further comprises a synchronization application that provides for automated review of an appointment that has been scheduled to determine whether the scheduled appointment conflicts with at least one entry in a local software calendar of one of the service providers, where the appointment database also provides a calendar for that service provider, and

wherein the users can schedule appointments through any computer as long as the computer can access the Internet with a browser

a synchronization application configured to review appointments that have been scheduled with the one or more service providers to determine if the appointments conflict with entries in one or more local software calendars maintained by the one or more service providers, the one or more local software calendars being separate and distinct from the calendars stored by the appointment database.

21. (Currently Amended) An on-line appointment system as recited in claim 20, wherein said appointment server ~~also provides~~ sends reminders for confirmed appointments.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) An on-line appointment system as recited in claim 20, wherein the users are consumers, and wherein said on-line appointment system further comprises further comprising a business directory of service providers.

24. (Currently Amended) An on-line appointment system as recited in claim 20, wherein said appointment database further stores ~~user~~ information for ~~users and at least one of said one or more~~ service providers ~~to reduce subsequent data entry~~.

5 25. (Withdrawn) A computer-implemented method for making on-line appointments over a computer network that allows making appointments over the Internet, said method comprising:

(a) registering as a user of an on-line appointment system, said registering providing a user name, contact information, and appointment availability information for the user, the appointment availability information indicating days and times during which the use is generally available to receive appointments;

(b) maintaining on-line calendars for the registered users, the on-line calendars including scheduled appointments or events for the respective registered user; and

(c) scheduling appointments between users, said scheduling (c) including at least

15 (c1) receiving an appointment request from a first registered user requesting an appointment with a second registered user; and

(c2) selecting an appointment date and time for the appointment in accordance with the appointment availability information for the second registered user and non-conflicting with any other previously scheduled appointments or events in the on-line calendar of the second registered user,

20 wherein at least some information of a plurality of the registered users are stored in an on-line directory,

wherein said method further comprises providing a search facility that a registered user can search, over the Internet, the on-line directory for another registered user to schedule an appointment with,

wherein the registered users can schedule appointments through any computer as long as the computer can access the Internet with a browser, and

wherein said method is implemented by another entity, with the another entity being independent of the registered users.

26. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 25, wherein said scheduling (c) further comprises:

(c3) scheduling the appointment for the first registered user and the second registered user at the selected appointment date and time.

27. (Withdrawn) A method as recited In claim 25, wherein said scheduling (c) further comprises:

(c3) tentatively scheduling the appointment for the first registered user and the second registered user at the selected appointment date and time; and

(c4) subsequently confirming the scheduled appointment by the second registered user.

28. (Withdrawn) A method as recited in claim 25, wherein said scheduling (c) further comprises:

(c3) tentatively scheduling the appointment for the first registered user

and the second registered user at the selected appointment date and time;

(c4) providing the scheduled appointment as a tentative appointment on the on-line calendars of the first registered user and the second registered user,

5 (c5) subsequently confirming the scheduled appointment by the second registered user, and

(c6) thereafter updating the scheduled appointment from the tentative appointment to a confirmed appointment on the on-line calendars of the first registered user and the second registered user.

10 29. (Withdrawn) A computer implemented method for providing on-line appointment services over a global computer network, said method comprising:

registering service providers for on-line appointments over the global computer network, said registering providing appointment availability information for the registered service providers; and

15 scheduling on-line appointments between the registered service providers and users, each user being interested in a service the registered service providers may be able to provide, over the global computer network based on the availability information,

wherein the users can schedule the on-line appointments through any computer as long as the computer can access the Internet with a browser,

20 wherein said method is implemented by another entity, with the another entity being independent of the registered service providers and the users, and

wherein said method further comprises:

providing an on-line directory of service providers;

providing a search facility that users can search for a particular service provider by searching through the on-line directory over the global computer network; and

once the particular service provider is found by a user using the search facility, said scheduling of an on-line appointment is initiated between the user and the particular service provider over the global computer network.

30-36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently Amended) An on-line appointment system as recited in claim 20, wherein the synchronization application automatically synchronizes the ~~calendar~~ calendars of the one ~~of the~~ or more service providers in the appointment database with the one or more local software ~~calendar~~ calendars of the one or more service providers.

38-39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the first calendar is an online calendar, ~~and wherein the another~~ and the second calendar is a local calendar.

41. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein ~~said checking is performed to determine~~ causing the second calendar maintained by the service provider to be checked comprises determining whether the selected appointment time conflicts with an item on the ~~another~~ second calendar.

42. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein wherein
said checking is performed to determine causing the second calendar maintained by the
service provider to be checked comprises determining whether the selected appointment
5 time for the on-line appointment should be accepted or declined.

43. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 42, wherein said
~~checking causes~~ causing the second calendar maintained by the service provider to be
checked comprises causing the selected appointment time for the on-line appointment to
10 be automatically accepted or declined.